

PRD STRATEGIC PLAN

Assessment of Vision 2020 Goals
(Results from meeting of 11/29/2006)

GOAL 1 - Build long-term Stable Financial Base *Secure a permanent endowment for Michigan State Parks (MSP) through a one-cent sales tax increase for one year. Explore other nontraditional sources of funding for the system.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?

- We do have a Trust Fund (current balance is \$120 million?)
- Proposal 1 – to protect the funds and citizen support.
- We are not only one with a funding problem.
- Citizens Committee reformed.
- Division Chief and Director – expertise.
- Park Foundation.
- Resource base.
- Usages – over 24 million.
- Partnerships models.
- Innovative staff.
- Citizen support of recreation programs.
- Many stakeholder and friends groups

2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?

- Lack of public knowledge of state park system.
- Tourism industry recognition of state parks.
- The longer you survive on less the harder it is to get more.
- How do we explain the need?
- Clearly identify the believable consequences.
- How do we compete?
- Total funding picture
- Establishing new users/younger.
- Creating a shared vision and coordinating efforts of the stakeholders/friends groups
- Keeping our state legislators/governor informed of the state park system's value
- Appealing to urban populations with less access to our state park system
- Implementing a solution that also addresses other related DNR financial needs (e.g. state forest recreation)

3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?

- Form a coalition local and state support.
- Future grant opportunities.
- Reveal the economy impact of state parks on local communities.
- Reconnect the disconnect.
- Image and pride in state parks.
- Re-create family.
- Better public education.
- Keep up with trends.
- Health and wellness.
- Engage under-represented public.
- Promoting State Parks/tourism for diversifying Michigan's economy

4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?

- Failure to recognize the differences of internal vs. external values.
- Business as normal/usual.
- Bad customer service.
- In-flexibility
- No lost value (Parks will always be there)
- Perception we serve only upper-level.
- Michigan's economy

5. Have any other funding sources been explored? (List and describe...e.g. State Park Foundation)

- Yes.

6. Is this still a valid goal?

- Valid goal.
- Not just for parks.
- Total DNR support.
- Build long-term stable funding with other partners.

7. Would you modify this goal? (How?)

- Recognize how PRD needs fit within overall DNR financial needs

8. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)

GOAL 2 - Provide Interpretive Programs in the Parks *Establish interpretive programs as a cornerstone for the activities provided in the parks system.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?

- Interpretation is a primary reason people visit parks... "Value added experience".
- "Corner" "stone".
- Minimize negative effect of recreation use on natural resources – "to be good stewards."
- Understanding → ownership → responsibility → preservation of Michigan's natural and cultural resources.
- Environmental stewardship learned in state park's transfers to stewardship at home/state/global.
- Provides opportunity to educate park visitor on department/DNR issues.

2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?

- Development of interpretation plans "a lot of work."
- Value of Interpretive opportunities should be a key factor in park acquisition decisions.
- Funding and staffing (quality-quantity).
- Complex Supervision within MDNR-PRD-DHAL.
- Utilization/reliance on inexperienced low paid staff.
- Integrate park staff rangers into overall interpretive effort (begin a program).

3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?

- Allow Interpretive "program" to expand beyond the traditional.
- Expand interpretive program to harbors and BAS.
- Take advantage of technology and innovation.
- Build relationship with state park foundation.
- Build partnership with private sector/corps for programming.
- Outreach programs
 - Traditional and non traditional users/non-users.
- "Leave no child inside."

4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?

- Lack of professional development.
- Lack of funding.
- Lack of understanding of importance of interpretation as marketing tool, etc.

5. Did we establish interpretive programs as the “cornerstone” for the activities provided in the parks system?

- “More work to do” but some good work done/underway.

6. To what degree is interpretation linked to ‘activities’ in the park?

- Some but greater linkage needed.

7. Is this still a valid goal?

- Yes!

8. Would you modify this goal? (How?)

- Broaden focus on DNR and PRD goals.
- Increase focus and funding for natural resource stewardship.
- Focus and \$ for natural resource stewardship.

9. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)

GOAL 3 - Improve/Expand Camping and Lodging Facilities *Upgrade existing camping and lodging facilities and work in partnership with the private sector to create new overnight accommodations.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?

- Knowledgeable staff.
- Location...geographical diversity/variety.
- Resources (natural and cultural/historical)
- Revenue source.
- Variety of accommodations.
- Raw material source.
- Un-meet demand (certain locations and times)
- CRS.
- Grant funding (foundations)
- Program to build upon.
- Loyal customer base.
- Good image.
- Land to expand.
- Host program (strength).
- Interpreter program (strength).

2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?

- Financial.
- Utility inflation.
- P.I.L.T. (Payment In Lieu of Taxes)
- Maintaining trained workforce.
- '97 user data. (need current use data)
- Diversifying users (race, age, gender)
- Overall infrastructure age.
- Perception of private industry competition.
- Keeping summer staff.
- Filling vacant positions.
- Government regulations.
- "Red tape."

3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?

- Inter-agency partnerships.
- Private sector.
- Volume buying power (utilities)
- Green initiatives (wind, solar, combustibles).
- New campground layouts.
- Expand "group" camping definition.
- Continue diverse lodging trend.
- Attract eco-tourists/corporate tourists (team building).
- Technology (e-newsletter, list serve, e-comment cards, etc.).
- Restore outdoor centers (historic structures)
- Identify future trends.
- Community partnerships.
- Expand programming.
- Attract and accommodate special user groups.
- Learn from other entities and states.
- Attract cultural diversity (staffing and users).

4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?

- Legislative mandates.
- Financial inability to maintain existing infrastructure
- Financial inability to replace existing infrastructure.
- Vandalism.
- Trespass.
- Social changes (generations).
- Weather.
- Urban sprawl.
- Overall lack of funding.

- Reduced staff hours.
 - Lack of public awareness.
 - Private competition.
 - Over dependence on fees.
5. Has PRD worked in partnership with the private sector to create new overnight accommodations? (other than design/construction)
 6. Is this still a valid goal?
 7. Would you modify this goal? (How?)
 8. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)

GOAL 4 - Improve/Expand Recreation Opportunities *Provide the facilities and information needed by the public to enjoy a range of activities throughout the parks system, and encourage new visitors to enjoy the parks' resources.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?
 - The ability to partner.
 - The ability to diversify.
 - Resources – facilities.
 - Improvements – bringing in new users.
 - Friends groups/stakeholders.
2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?
 - Access from Urban areas (no flexibility in MVP).
 - Policy – historic bureaucracy.
 - Attitudes.
 - Lack of staff and money.
 - Create more partnerships.
 - Interfacing with P.A. 59 (2% tax on lodging...would this apply to camper lodging?)
 - Training/change attitudes/enable administrators.
 - Think ahead...identify new trends, etc.
3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?
 - Partner with AARP.
 - Partner with community-vendors.
 - Having Demo Day – provide more events.
 - Connect DNR PRD resources with community resources.
 - Provide concierge services.

- More varieties level of challenge.
4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?
 - Attitudes.
 - Non-flexibility in MVP.
 - Liability.
 5. How do non-resource based activities fit in with the park system? (e.g. Model Aircraft Flying Fields?... others?)
 6. Is this still a valid goal?
 - Yes (based on discussion at the session wrap-up)
 7. Would you modify this goal? (How?)
 8. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)

GOAL 5 - Establish Programs for Stewardship, Park Evaluation, and Park Planning *Initiate inventory and management programs that help protect sensitive historic and natural resources in the parks. Improve the park planning process through better use of resource information and public participation. Adopt criteria that can be used to evaluate individual parks, or to guide future park acquisitions.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?
 - Stewardship
 - Protect/sustain resource.
 - Meets mission/law.
 - New planning process.
 - Inventory – Natural and Historical.
 - Diversifies management.
 - Planning
 - New planning process.
 - Ability to set priorities statewide.
 - Provides “meaning.”
 - Sensitivity to natural features.
 - Inspired other groups/advocacy.
 - Allowed for more interpretation/education.
 - Facilitated cooperation/partnerships.
 - Provides model for planning.
 - Promotes volunteerism.
2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?

- Funding, etc.
- Preserving cultural built resources.
- Preserving archaeological resources.
- Stewardship vs. outside political interference and economic development.
- Inability to get prescribed burning done.
- Ecological restoration (invasive species)
- Accelerating and completing the planning process.
- Preservation vs. recreation (enjoying it to death).
- Public education.
- Getting public to recognize themselves as stewards.
- Changes in leadership.
- Efficiency.
- Urban sprawl.
- Land control/acquisition.
- How to reach the next generation.

3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?

- “Geo-Tourism.” (tourism focused on ‘place’) leads to appreciation and protection of those places.
- We have the authentic natural and cultural resources coming together.
- Expanding education, interpretation and volunteering friends groups.
- Take the message outside parks.
- We have infrastructure for access to resources.
- Connecting natural landscape to the story/history.
- Pod casts/technology.
- Tying Wi-Fi hotspots to appreciating resources.
- Radio broadcasts for interpretation.
- Changes in leadership.

4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?

- Eco-poachers.
- Funding.
- Invasive species (including nuisance native species).
- Climate change.
- Hydrologic change.
- Losing resources to benign neglect/lack of resources.
- Overuse (love it to death).
- ORVs/snowmobiles and other uses.
- Changes in leadership.

- Outside uses conflicting with resources.
 - Continued decline of funding relative to need.
5. Has PRD improved the park planning process through better use of resource information and public participation? (How?)
- Yes, 'Management Planning' process incorporates stewardship.
6. Is this still a valid goal?
- Yes.
7. Would you modify this goal? (How?)
- Expand outside parks.
 - Incorporate technology.
 - Growing.
 - How to show success.
 - How to quantify success – continue/expand.
8. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)
- Education/outreach.
 - Technology.
 - Establish separate goals for stewardship and planning?
 - Accelerate planning process.
 - Regional planning.
 - Linking DNR planning with other community planning.

GOAL 6 - Create a Marketing Program *Develop a marketing program for the state parks system that would give the public more information about the opportunities available in the system, and provide park managers with information to guide future decisions on park facilities, activities, and programs.*

1. What are the **Strengths** you can associate with this goal?
- Our stakeholder groups are doing it for us.
 - Default marketing.
 - Missing (not many 'strengths').
 - The ability to partner and diversify products.
2. What are the **Challenges** you associate with this goal?
- Partnerships.

- Public support of state parks.
- Making the public aware of our funding issues.
- How do we market to harbor users. (and BAS users)
- Identify market/users.
- No marketing plan – it's a new idea.
- Developing unified marketing across related DNR Divisions (e.g. FMFM, Wildlife)

3. What are the **Opportunities** to be realized with this goal?

- Cross market.
- Create a marketing plan – identify expected outcome.
- Re-visit current policies.
- Identify non-users and why they are not using parks.
- Creating a list of activities at under-used facilities.
- Create a list of activities that are available at each park.
- Work with the corporate sector.

4. What are the **Threats** you can associate with this goal?

- \$5 walk-in-fee – increased fees.
- Policies/directives.
- Lack of training – preconceived attitudes.
- Concession contracts.

5. Does marketing provide guidance to park managers in making decisions on park facilities, activities, and programs?

6. Is this still a valid goal?

- Yes (based on discussion at the session wrap-up)

7. Would you modify this goal? (How?)

8. Would you establish any other goals related to this topic? (What?)